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SH5 Tehuelche SH5

291 out, will keep the wearer dry for a considerable time in the wettest weather. This is often dispensed with in the chase, but, if worn when riding, is secured at the waist by a belt of hide or leather if it can be obtained. When in camp the belt is not used, and the garment is worn loose, something after the fashion of the 'melodramatic assassin's' cloak. When sitting by the fireside, or even when walking about, the furred part of the mantle is generally kept over the
● [753] mouth—as the Tehuelches aver that the cold wind causes sore gums—a habit which assists in rendering their guttural and at all times rather unintelligible language more difficult of comprehension to the novice.

Their potro boots (fig. 5) or buskins are made from the skin of horse's hock, and occasionally from the leg of a large puma, drawn on up to the knee and fastened round the foot. It is thus worn for a day or two until the boot has taken the shape of the foot, when the leather is cut at the toes and sewn up to fit. When the sole is worn, or in very wet or snowy weather, hide overshoes are worn besides, and the footprints thus made are really large enough to convey the idea of giant's feet, and partly explain the term 'Patagon,' or large feet, applied to these Indians by the Spanish discoverers. The boots are rarely put on in camp, for economical reasons, though turning out barefoot in the frozen grass at daylight is unpleasant even to a Tehuelche. But the material of the boot would soon wear out if used for walking. In riding they are secured by garters, either gay coloured woven bands, or, which is *de rigueur* for chiefs, of hide, with massive silver buckles. Although the usual head-dress of the men is simply a coloured fillet to confine the hair, yet sometimes, and especially on state occasions, hats, if procurable, are indulged in. Old Orkeke frequently wore a felt wideawake, which was, on returning from hunting, carefully put up by his thoughtful spouse.

The women's dress consists of a mantle similar to that worn by the men, but secured at the throat by a large silver

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thus to combine the marvels told them, or even to cap what they consider one legend with another; but there is no doubt that they do believe in a good Spirit, though they think he lives 'careless of mankind.' They have no idols or objects of worship, nor—if a year's experience can enable one to judge—do they observe any periodical religious festival, on which either the good or evil Spirit is adored. The mention of this by other travellers can only be explained by confused accounts which have attributed Araucanian customs to the totally distinct Patagonians. The belief which prompts all their religious acts is that in the existence of many active and malicious evil spirits or demons, of whom the principal one is always on the watch to cause mischief. To propitiate or drive away this spirit is the function of the wizard, or doctor, or medicine man, who combines the medical and magical arts, though not possessed of an exclusive faculty for either. All sacrifices of mares and horses, not at stated times, but as occasion requires, such as a birth, death, &c., are intended to propitiate the Gualichu. When a child hurts itself, the slaughter of mares seems to partake at once of the nature of a thank-offering that the hurt was no worse, and a propitiation to avert further harm.

In camp the Gualichu takes up his position outside the back of the toldo, watching for an opportunity to molest the inmates, and is supposed to be kept quiet by the spells of the doctor, who is not only gifted with the power of laying the devil, but can even detect him by sight. I inquired of one of the doctors what he was like, but received an evasive answer; on which I informed him that my devil took all sorts of shapes—sometimes appearing as a guanaco, ostrich, puma, skunk, or vulture, at which the medical man was intensely amused. This household devil is, as far as I could ascertain, supposed to enter into the different parts of the bodies of people, and cause sickness which the doctor is appealed to to cure. The treatment in the case of headache, for instance, is very simple: the doctor takes the patient's head

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met with. Another superstition is that a two-headed guanaco exists in the south, the appearance of which is a forerunner of sickness. According to my informant, after its last appearance measles, or a similar disease, decimated the Southern tribe, the disease having been propagated by communication with Punta Arenas, where it was at that time rife. Any unfamiliar object that they do not comprehend, as, for instance, a compass or a watch, is regarded with suspicion as being tenanted by an evil spirit. Sometimes these objects are supposed to bring luck at play, and are eagerly sought for. One of my companions was possessed of a watch, obtained in Punta Arenas, and, before playing cards, he would often ask me to set it going, the ticking being regarded as the voice of the hidden Gualichu. My compass was also in constant demand, but the privilege of temporary possession was necessarily restricted to a few favoured friends. I explained, to the best of my power, the use of this instrument, which was comprehended by many of them; and they became very fond of asking me to point out the precise direction of various points known to them, and were greatly delighted at the correctness with which their inquiries were generally satisfied. A locket, worn by me round my neck, was also regarded as a talisman, securing the wearer from death.

With all this superstition, regard for omens, and belief in demons, they by no means accord implicit faith and respect to the wizards. Nor do they trust to their spells alone in case of disease; many possess an acquaintance with medicinal herbs, and apply them with good effect. Besides being good farriers, they practise blood-letting, not only on the sick, but, like our grandfathers, at regular seasons have themselves blooded, believing it to be beneficial. Casimiro declared that the superior health of the Tehuelches, compared with that of the colonists or Christians, was attributable to this practice. They also understand and sometimes employ poisons, not to envenom their weapons, but for secretly taking off an enemy. Such cases are rare, but

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dered observation and record, in addition to hunting and the usual toils of marching, impossible. It was the more needful for me to endeavour to keep up, as all were more or less ill, and becoming increasingly gloomy and dispirited. To add to the troubles which weighed down the Indians' spirits at this place, the doctor's horse fell while descending a precipitous rocky hill. The unfortunate physician was stunned, and very nearly crushed to death by the horse falling on him; great grief was universally expressed at this catastrophe, as no one was left to cure the invalids and contend with the malignant Gualichu, who, it was natural for the Indians to imagine, had laid a trap for his opponent, and upset the medicine man's steed in order to have the field clear for himself.

We encamped in a sort of morass, by the side of the hills overlooking the plain, and were woke at daylight by the chattering of a flock of blue and orange paroquets; these birds, which brought back old pleasant associations of the banks of the Parana, and almost seemed to be harbingers of civilised life, were numerous in this locality, though they were the first of the species that I had observed in the country.

The distant signal smoke was concluded to indicate the presence of Jackechan and the Pampa Indians under Teneforo, and all were in spirits at the prospect of obtaining news, and perhaps luxuries in the shape of flour, yerba, &c., from Patagones. The order was accordingly given to march, and a large answering signal fire kindled in some dry pasture bordering the hill side, a messenger being at the same time despatched to ascertain the news. After a rather long march over a barren plain strewn with angular masses of chalcedony and projecting rocks resembling alabaster, we arrived at a dreary encampment, sheltered under a bank, from which a spring gushed out, forming a refreshing rivulet.

The mutiny of my page had compelled me to enjoy the pleasure of driving my own cattle, following the track in

The marriage ceremony, once the woman's price has been fixed 585
and paid, is limited to the father's taking her to the groom's tent, unless she herself goes off to the groom unattended, a thing which is not at all reprehensible. The groom then has a mare or two slaughtered, according to his means, and invites the bride's and his own male and female relatives and friends to eat the meat which, once done, the marriage ceremony is over.

Both the men and the women are very loving and devoted to their 854
children, whom, as soon as they are born, they bind about with many soft and pliable leather bands which they have in readiness. The babies are bound for over a month to a board made of many small sticks which are tied together and covered with hide. The Indians say that they grow up [142
straight in this way, and the fact is that both the men and the women are 516]
all very straight and well built, and none are ever seen whose shoulders are hunched. Once the babies are taken out of their bindings the mothers usually carry them about with them on their backs, the baby's head issuing from the same opening in the garment as the mother's. When on the march they make a sort of cradle out of hide and sticks, rounded over and sealed on all sides except for openings for the head and feet, which they line and embellish with flannel, cloth or anything they may have, and ornament with beads, bells, etc., as they may be able to, and they secure them on the horse's rump behind the mother. Children are never seen to weep amongst these people, unless they receive a blow or fall.

Their religion is limited to a sort of belief in two powers, one 776
benign, which has jurisdiction only over the heavens and is independent 778
from and without power on the earth and its inhabitants, of whom they [771]
take little notice; the other power is both benign and stern, and governs the earth, directing, chastening and rewarding its inhabitants. This power they worship in any guise in which they may represent it, or in the shape of some object found on the beach washed up from a shipwreck, such as masks from a ship's prow or fashion pieces from the stern, these being the preferred representations for their worship since they suppose them to have appeared by enchantment. This deity is called the Camalasque, which can be rendered as "powerful and valiant" [75]. Each person who has one of the figures defends it and believes that his is the true deity and those belonging to other Indians are false ones; yet disputes never flare up or get out of hand because they feel that the deity will itself bring down vengeance upon those who offend it. They believe that sickness and death are the [753
god's retribution, unless they occur in old age, in which case they are 76[]
attributed to natural causes. These images are kept in the tents, completely wrapped up in skins, woolen cloth, flannel or linen, as each is [756]

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Mbaya SK11

A 123 797 (77 former customs, raved when they found their medicines laughed at, and the fountain of their gains dried up. The jugglers, who had sucked the bodies, and drained the property of the sick, were despised by their countrymen as a set of worthless drones.

T 75-3 756 The Patagonians, and other southern savages, think the body of a sick person to be possessed of an evil demon. Their physicians carry about T [534] drums, with horrible forms depicted on them, which they strike by the sick man's bed, either to consult the demon concerning the nature of the disease, or to drive it from the body of their patient. If any one dies of a disease, the relations persecute the physician most terribly, as T [166] the author of his death. If a Cacique dies, they put all the physicians to death, that they may not fly elsewhere. Actuated by an irrational T [763] kind of pity, they bury the dying before they expire. Father Strobl pulled one man alive from the grave. The Guaycurùs call their phy- M 756 sicians Nigienigis. A gourd filled with hard seeds, and a fan of dusky emu feathers are their chief insignia, and medical instruments, which they always carry in their hands that they may C 756 be known. I must not omit to speak of the physicians of the Chiquitos. A juggler physician, when he goes to visit the sick, fills his belly with the most exquisite dainties, chickens, hens,